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[Click here to read my May 2008 district newsletter.](#)

Update from Congresswoman Melissa Bean

Dear Friend,

Now that spring has finally arrived, many of us find ourselves outdoors or at one of our many 8th District lakes with friends and family. Time for soccer practice and trips to the beach reminds me how lucky we are to enjoy the beauty of our communities. One of my top priorities in Congress is to make sure my children and yours continue to enjoy a healthy environment for years to come.

To shape a cleaner, healthier and more secure future for our children, I have introduced my **Green Innovation Initiative**. This trio of bills is meant to stimulate investment in green technology by businesses and homeowners. This legislation will help secure our energy infrastructure and reduce our dependence on foreign oil by boosting conservation. Promoting development of these energy-efficient technologies will revitalize our workforce, expand job opportunities and strengthen our economy.

The Next Generation Homes Act, H.R. 5597, promotes the construction and purchase of energy-efficient homes through tax incentives to home builders and home buyers, making these homes more affordable.

The Commercial Conservation Act, H.R. 4574, encourages similar investment in efficiency in commercial buildings by providing tax incentives for building owners who invest in new heating and air conditioning systems that are measurably more energy efficient. Modern commercial air conditioners are at least 20 percent more efficient than older ones and do not contain CFCs, or chlorofluorocarbons, which harm the ozone layer.

The third bill in this initiative is H.R. 5372, the **Recycling Investment Saves Energy (RISE) Act**. This bill would provide tax incentives for recycling companies to invest in advanced recycling equipment, increasing the quantity and quality of the recycled material recovered by an industry that employs over 1.1 million people nationwide.

Inside, you'll find details about these provisions and other work we've been doing to keep our air and water clean. If there's more you would like to know, or if you have other questions for me, please do not hesitate to call or email my office at any time.

Thank you, and it's an honor to represent you.

Melissa L. Bean





Congresswoman Bean spoke to volunteers at Earth Day Work Day at Spring Creek Forest Preserve in Barrington about the importance of protecting the environment.



Here's some other recent environmental legislation I've been proud to support:

H.R. 2537 The Beach Protection Act of 2008

This legislation renews the Environmental Protection Authority's BEACH program to protect our nation's oceanfronts, riverfronts and 5,500 miles of Great Lakes shoreline. It also directs the EPA to develop rules for the rapid testing of coastal waters, so beachgoers can have access to same-day information on whether conditions at the nation's beaches are safe for their families.

H.R. 6 The Energy Independence and Security Act

H.R. 6 contains provisions that boost vehicle fuel efficiency standards for the first time in 30 years and encourage investment in renewable energy. At a time when rising gas prices continue to affect families' lifestyles and America depends on \$200 billion of oil imports per year, this legislation moves us toward a long-term solution to reduce U.S. energy dependence.

CN Railroad and our Local Environment

While working with many people across our district, I have been leading the Congressional opposition to Canadian National Railroad's (CN) proposed purchase of the EJ&E Railroad.

After CN announced their proposal, I pushed the Surface Transportation Board (STB), to provide an environmental review of the transaction and local forums for feedback from residents. Thousands of you from over 15 communities in our district attended those or shared your concerns in letters and emails.

This 400 percent increase in freight traffic would also increase noise and air pollution, local traffic congestion, potential danger at grade crossings, and life-threatening delays for first responders in an emergency.

To coordinate Congressional opposition, I've written several letters against the transaction, some co-signed by Senator Dick Durbin and others by suburban members of the Illinois Congressional delegation. I also brought House Transportation Committee Chairman James Oberstar (MN-08) to tour the EJ&E crossing and meet with local mayors and business leaders. Chairman Oberstar agreed to support an appeal for more intensive consideration from the STB, which holds authority to approve or disapprove the sale.



Congresswoman Bean introduces her Green Innovation Initiative at the Sears Tower alongside Congressman Bill Foster (IL-1), Governor Pat Quinn, and representatives from the environmental community and the business community.

For more information about my ongoing work on this issue and ways you can get involved, please visit my website:

<http://www.house.gov/bean>

Bean's Green Innovation Initiative

..... **consists of:**

H.R. 5597

The Next Generation Homes Act

**Promotes the construction and purchase
of energy efficient homes.**

- Tax credits ranging from \$700 to \$10,000 for building homes that are measurably more energy efficient, based on levels of efficiency defined by the 2004 International Residential Code and the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) index.
- Assists homebuyers when the cost of an energy efficient home is greater than that of an equivalent traditional home by making that difference tax deductible.

H.R. 4574

The Commercial Conservation Act

**Encourages investment in newer and more efficient
HVAC systems in commercial buildings.**

- Changes the tax code to reduce the depreciation time for all commercial building HVAC units from 39 years to 25 years.
- Reduces depreciation time to 20 years for units that are at least 10 percent more efficient than existing standards.

